

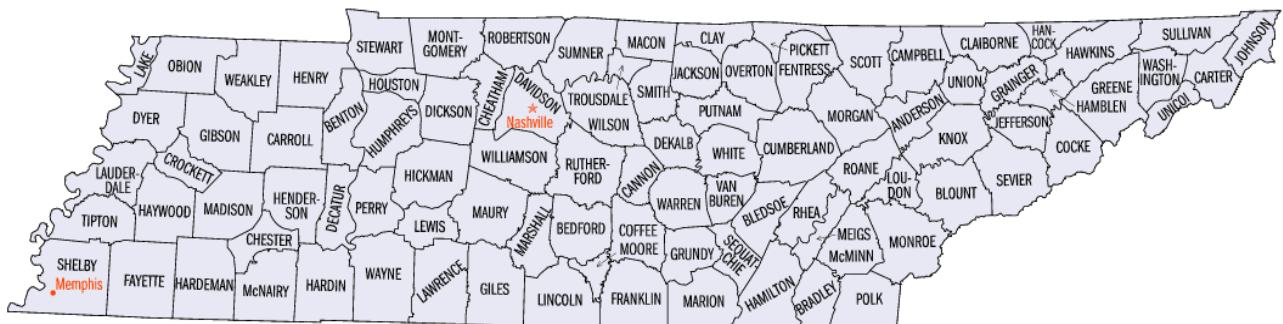
# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### Memphis, Tennessee

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

July 2002



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Memphis**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- The city of Memphis is located in Shelby County.
- Shelby County Population: 896,013 (2001 Estimate), 897,472 (2000 Census)
- Memphis City Population: 650,100 (2000 Census)
- Memphis City Race/Ethnicity: 34.41% white; 61.41% black; 1.46% Asian; 0.19% American Indian and Alaska Native; 0.04% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander; 1.45% of Other race; 1.04% two or more races; 2.97% Hispanic Origin.

### **Politics<sup>2</sup>**

- Mayor: Dr. Willie W. Herenton
- City Council: E.C. Jones (District 1), Brent Taylor (2), Tajuan Stout-Mitchell (3), Janet Hooks (4), John Vergos (5), Edmund Ford (6), Barbara Swearengen Holt (7), Joe Brown (8), Ricke Peete (8), Myron Lowery (8), Pat Vander Schaaf (9), Tom Marshall (9), Jack Sammons (9)
- Director Memphis Police Department: Walter Crews

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- The Memphis Police Department Crime Stoppers Program began in Memphis in 1981, and has since caught over 5,000 felons, solved over 14,000 crimes, and recovered over \$12 million worth of stolen property. One of the responsibilities of Crime Stoppers is the drug eradication program sponsored by the Shelby County Attorney General's Office. This program offers rewards for the arrest of all drug dealers who sell drugs in residential rental property. When calls of drug sales in rental property are received, the complaint is assigned a number and forwarded to a Shelby County Attorney General investigator. The investigator then directs an investigation by uniform patrol officers in the area. If an arrest is made, the reward is paid by the Attorney General's office, via Crime Stoppers.<sup>3</sup>
- In the fall of 1994, the Memphis Police Department became a participant in the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program, which consists of a curriculum of 17 hour-long weekly lessons, taught to fifth and sixth graders to strengthen their substance abuse prevention skills. Eight Memphis Police Department officers were trained by the Tennessee Highway Patrol, which manages the D.A.R.E. program statewide.<sup>4</sup>
- The Drug Dealer Eviction Program (DDEP) is a result of a state law, which passed in 1997. The law provides that, upon notice, individuals may be evicted for felony drug violations occurring in rental property. After receiving notice, the landlord may proceed with the eviction while maintaining contact with the District Attorney's Office. If the landlord does not take action, the law allows the District Attorney's Office to proceed with the eviction. This program screens all arrests involving drug charges to determine if they meet the program criteria required by the law. Other

cases arise through the relationship the DDEP shares with the Crime Stoppers program of the Memphis Police Department.<sup>5</sup>

### **Funding**

- Memphis Weed and Seed <sup>6</sup>  
Memphis received official recognition and Federal funding as a Weed and Seed site in September 1999. \$125,000 was awarded to Memphis to establish law enforcement and community-based programs.

### **Crime and Drug-Related Crime**

- During 2001 in Memphis, there were 142 homicides reported to law enforcement. <sup>7</sup>

Crimes reported to the Memphis Police Department, 1998-2001

Crimes	1998	1999	2000	2001
Homicide	118	122	109	142
Rape	722	662	559	547
Robbery	4,172	3,708	4020	4,480
Burglary	14,921	12,973	14,600	15,719
Larceny	20,899	21,729	23,156	29,555
Auto Theft	8,337	7,842	8,525	8,913
Aggravated Assault	4,048	4,086	4,586	4,860

- During 2000, the Memphis Police Department Drug Unit responded to 2,243 drug complaints. The Major Violators Team served fifty-two search warrants while other teams within the unit served 103 search warrants.<sup>8</sup>
- Memphis Police Department Vice and Narcotics officers were involved in 2,573 misdemeanor arrests and 1058 felony arrests during 2000.
- In West Tennessee during 2001, there were 129 total drug arrests by the West Tennessee Violent Crime and Drug Task Force.<sup>9</sup>

West Tennessee Violent Crime and Drug Task Force, Drug Arrest Summary, 2001

	Sale	Possession	Transport	Totals
Marijuana	6	42	0	48
Cocaine	0	10	0	10
Crack	27	21	1	49
Methamphetamine	5	5	3	13
Prescription	0	0	1	1
Other	3	3	2	8
Total Drug Arrests	41	81	7	129

## Drugs

### ➤ Cocaine

Crack cocaine is widely available in the Memphis area and costs between \$5 - \$20.

Crack cocaine users tend to be adults (>30), or young adults (18-30) and black.<sup>10</sup>

Many gang members paint graffiti with dollar signs to indicate crack is sold in that particular area.<sup>11</sup> Powder cocaine has been replacing crack cocaine in speedballs.

Domestic violence is frequently named in relation to powder cocaine. Powder cocaine is widely available in the Memphis area and costs between \$20 - \$100 per gram.

Powder cocaine is most often used by whites and blacks in the Memphis area, and use has increased on college campuses.<sup>12</sup>

### ➤ Heroin

Heroin is reported as “not very” to “somewhat available” in the Memphis area.

Heroin dealers are often involved in some form of violent crime or gang related activity. Users tend to be young adults (18-30), adults (> 30), and white. Injection is the most common form of ingestion in the Memphis area. Heroin usually sells for \$50 per 0.1 gram.<sup>13</sup> Mexican brown powder heroin is available in small quantities, while Mexican black tar heroin is less available in the Memphis area.<sup>14</sup>

### ➤ Marijuana

Hydroponically grown marijuana is considered widely available in the Memphis area, while Sinsemilla and BC Bud availability have decreased. An ounce of marijuana costs \$100. Use appears to be evenly distributed among adolescents, young adults, and adults, with blacks being the predominate user group. Blunts have overtaken joints as the dominate vehicle of administration. Availability in distribution networks has increased and the drug sold in nightclubs, shopping malls, over the Internet, at playgrounds/parks, around supermarkets, and at private parties.<sup>15</sup>

### ➤ Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine is the most widely abused and widely available drug in the Memphis area. “Ice,” which is almost 100% pure methamphetamine, is considered somewhat available in Memphis. Manufacturers are producing methamphetamine with a new “crush and rush” method that doesn’t filter the starch out of the ephedrine or pseudoephedrine tablets. This method eliminates steps, making it quicker, but produces a less pure methamphetamine. A gram of methamphetamine cost \$90 - \$125. “Blonde” refers to the crystal form of methamphetamine that can cut a users nose when snorted. “Cinnamon” refers to another form of methamphetamine that is pink. Females are increasingly using methamphetamine. Younger adults are the predominate user group, but adults are increasing in usage.<sup>16</sup>

### ➤ Other Dangerous Drugs<sup>17</sup>

Diverted OxyContin sales have increased in the Memphis area and the drug is considered somewhat available.

Ecstasy sells for \$5-\$30 per pill. Although the predominant user age is split between young adults and adolescents, emerging users are predominantly adolescents.

Furthermore, those with high socioeconomic status are increasingly using the drug.

### Juveniles

- In Shelby County during 1998, 212 juveniles were transferred to criminal court for trial as an adult, compared to 79 in 2001.<sup>18</sup>

#### Juveniles Transferred to Criminal Court for Trial as an Adult, Shelby County, 1998-2001

1998	1999	2000	2001
212	160	152	79

- 21 of the charges in which a juvenile was transferred to criminal court to be charged as an adult were drug/alcohol crimes.<sup>19</sup>

#### Charges of Juveniles Transferred to Criminal Court, Shelby County, 2001

Crimes against the person	97
Crime against property	43
Drug and Alcohol Crimes	21
Weapons crimes	4
Traffic/driving crimes	11
Miscellaneous/Other Crimes	32
TOTAL	208

- In Shelby County during 2001, there were 5 juveniles transferred to criminal court on manufacturing/dealing/selling/possession with intent charges for marijuana.<sup>20</sup>

#### Juveniles Transferred to Criminal Court, Drug and Alcohol Crimes, Shelby County, 2001

Manufacturing/dealing/selling/possession with intent	
Cocaine	6
Marijuana	5
Other	3
LSD	1
Simple possession/casual exchange	
Cocaine	1
Marijuana	3
Driving Under the Influence	1
Refusal to submit to bac test	1
TOTAL	21

### Enforcement

- As of October 2000, there were 2,764 total law enforcement employees in Memphis, 1,854 of which were officers.<sup>21</sup>
- The Metro DUI Unit is comprised of law enforcement officers from the Memphis Police Department and the Shelby County Sheriff's Department. All officers assigned to this unit are specially trained in the testing of drivers suspected of being under the

influence of alcohol or other drugs. Video cameras were installed to aid in the evidentiary aspect of drunk driving arrests. During 2000, the Metro DUI Unit made 5,323 arrests. Out of those arrests, 1,452 involved accidents and 4,558 were the result of patrol activity.<sup>22</sup>

- The Anti-Gang Team, with the Memphis Police Department and the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, works to develop a youth-gang violence initiative to curb the supply of potential members to gangs. One result of the Team was the formation of the Metro Gang Unit. This unit, comprised of Memphis police officers and Shelby County deputy sheriffs, serves as a street level enforcement unit and dovetails into the efforts of the Anti-Gang Team. The District Attorney General's Office initiated a multi-agency attempt to crack down on criminal gang activity and at the same time identify at risk youth and offer them an alternative to gang life and/or an opportunity to get out of a gang. The first "target" area chosen is composed of three police precinct wards in the Frayser community.<sup>23</sup>

### **Trafficking and Seizures**

- U.S. Custom Service agents seized 41.1 kilograms of heroin at the Memphis International Airport in 2001.<sup>24</sup>
- Law enforcement in Memphis estimated that the city has over 10,000 street gang members, most of who distribute drugs.<sup>25</sup>
- Dealers are becoming less organized and independent sellers increasingly handle the retailing of illicit drugs. Sales of illicit drugs are moving out of the city and into the suburbs/ rural areas.<sup>26</sup>
- During 2000, efforts of the Memphis Police Department Vice and Narcotics Unit resulted in the following seizures: 1059 vehicles, 293 handguns, and 46 long guns.<sup>27</sup>
- The estimated value of all drugs seized by the Vice and Narcotics Unit during 2000 was \$23.3 million.<sup>28</sup>

### **Courts**

- As of January 2002, there was one drug court in Memphis that had recently been implemented.<sup>29</sup>
- A study by the University of Memphis' Center for Community Criminology and Research looked at the records of 190 drug court participants along with 172 defendants arrested on similar drug charges but not enrolled in the drug court program. Records of the two groups were compared over a three-year period beginning at the time of arrest. The study found that only 24 percent of those individuals completing the drug court program had been arrested again on any new charges during the three-year period. By comparison, 80 percent of the individuals in the non-drug court group had been arrested on new charges within the three-year period.<sup>30</sup>
- The financial benefits of a drug court are illustrated in the comparison of costs for housing an inmate or treating that same individual. According to the Shelby County Sheriff's Office and Corrections Center, it costs the county about \$84 per day to house a single inmate in the Shelby County jail and about \$44 a day to house an inmate at the Shelby County Corrections Center. This same individual in the drug court treatment program will only cost the taxpayers about \$7 per day for outpatient

treatment. This figure is reduced even more when considering the fact that many participants in the drug court treatment program pay a portion of the treatment costs themselves.<sup>31</sup>

## Corrections

- The Shelby County Division of Corrections averages 2,900 inmates and has peaked at 3,300. Client's sentences range anywhere from a few days to 8 years. The most common sentences are 2-3 year for felony drug charges.<sup>32</sup>

## Treatment

- As of December 31, 2001 there were 190 clients accepted into drug treatment through the drug court system.<sup>33</sup>

## Sources

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

<sup>2</sup> City of Memphis Web site: <http://www.cityofmemphis.org>

<sup>3</sup> Memphis Crime Stoppers: <http://www.crimestopmem.org/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, Drug Dealer Eviction Program: <http://www.scdag.com/ddev.htm#top>

<sup>6</sup> Memphis Business Journal, *City of Memphis Lands 'Weed and Seed' Grant*, September 27, 1999: <http://www.bizjournals.com/memphis/stories/1999/10/04/weekinbiz.html>

<sup>7</sup> City of Memphis Police Department Web site, Crime Stats: <http://www.memphispolice.org/partone.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Memphis Police Department Web site, Special Operations section: <http://www.memphispolice.org/special.htm>

<sup>9</sup> Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, The West Tennessee Violent Crime & Drug Task Force: <http://www.scdag.com/wtrvcadu.htm#top>

<sup>10</sup> ONDCP, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, April 2002: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact\\_of\\_sept11.pdf](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact_of_sept11.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, Tennessee Drug Threat Assessment, May 2002: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/1017/index.htm>

<sup>12</sup> ONDCP, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, April 2002: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact\\_of\\_sept11.pdf](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact_of_sept11.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, Tennessee Drug Threat Assessment, May 2002: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/1017/index.htm>

<sup>15</sup> ONDCP, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, April 2002: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact\\_of\\_sept11.pdf](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact_of_sept11.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, Transfers of Juveniles to Criminal Court: <http://www.scdag.com/juvyxfers.htm#top>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, *Crime in the United States 2000*, October 2001: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/00cius.htm>

<sup>22</sup> City of Memphis Police Department Web site: <http://www.memphispolice.org/>

<sup>23</sup> Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, Anti-Gang Team: <http://www.scdag.com/gangteam.htm#top>

<sup>24</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, Tennessee Drug Threat Assessment, May 2002: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/1017/index.htm>

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<sup>25</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, Tennessee Drug Threat Assessment, May 2002:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/1017/index.htm>

<sup>26</sup> ONDCP, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, April 2002:

[http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact\\_of\\_sept11.pdf](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact_of_sept11.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Memphis Police Department Web site, Special Operations Section:

<http://www.memphispolice.org/special.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> OJP Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County, January 17, 2002:

<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/spa/justice/publications/drgchart2k.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, Drug Treatment Court:

<http://www.scdag.com/drugct.htm#top>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Shelby County Division of Corrections, History:

[http://www.co.shelby.tn.us/county\\_gov/divisions/corrections/history.htm](http://www.co.shelby.tn.us/county_gov/divisions/corrections/history.htm)

<sup>33</sup> Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, Drug Treatment Court:

<http://www.scdag.com/drugct.htm#top>



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